

The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

Executive Registry

86- 5146

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RECPT #

4 November 1986

The Honorable Fred C. Ikle
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
The Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Fred:

This is in response to the concern you expressed at our last meeting over the flap caused by an alleged security violation contained in a statement submitted by Douglas Feith in connection with a July 17, 1986 hearing. According to the information you provided me, and contained in Representative McCurdy's letter to the Secretary, the Subcommittee received Mr. Feith's statement in an unclassified form on August 11, and subsequently was contacted by an officer of CIA's Arms Control Intelligence Staff and told that a security breach had occurred and that Mr. Feith's statement should be classified SECRET NOFORN. You indicated to me that Mr. Feith had both contacted CIA to clear the statement and that the information in question had been previously published in Soviet Military Power (SMP) 1984. []

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After our conversation, I asked for a complete review of this episode. For the record, the 1984 edition of Soviet Military Power did, in fact, refer to seven biological warfare facilities. Accordingly, there was no security breach by Mr. Feith and CIA will so notify Representative McCurdy. []

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
That said, there were circumstances in this situation that contributed to the misunderstanding. Mr. Feith's text was delivered to ACIS with only about two hours to review its contents, thereby allowing little opportunity to review past public statements and publications to make a final determination whether this information had been cleared in the past. Our officers simply had no immediate recollection of the previous release giving such explicit data on BW-related facilities. The number was not repeated in SMP 85 or 86. Alternative language was provided but not used by Mr. Feith, nor did he contact ACIS to note the unclassified source of the reference or to work out satisfactory arrangements as other senior OSD officials do on a regular basis. []

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We regret the incident and I hope this letter will clear the record with respect to any security violation by Mr. Feith. I also have

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reminded our officers that they are to be as thorough and as cooperative as possible in clearing and declassifying proposed OSD statements and will have them speak to their contacts in OSD directly to reinforce our willingness to cooperate. At the same time, we ask that OSD continue to help us by providing sufficient time to review proposed releases, to include a bibliography when possible, and to talk with us when problems arise, or when there are questions about the classification or sanitization review. 

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Sincerely,



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Robert M. Gates
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

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